

## Jackie Kennedy's letters to priest should have been burnt

Thomas Reese | May. 14, 2014 NCR Today

We are learning many fascinating things about the life and thoughts of Jackie Kennedy from her letters to Vincentian Fr. Joseph Leonard, [which were made public this week](#) [1].

As a journalist and student of history, I find these letters fascinating. But as a priest, I am appalled. The letters should have been burnt.

Although nothing in these letters is protected by the seal of confession, there is a presumption of confidentiality when a person writes to a priest about her spiritual life. Simply because the person is famous is no reason to break that confidentiality.

All Hallows College should have never sold these letters. At a minimum, they should have been buried in the archives for 100 years. By making them public, it puts everyone on notice that what you write a priest could become public.

Thanks. That is just what we needed.

[Jesuit Fr. Thomas Reese is a senior analyst for NCR and author of *Inside the Vatican: The Politics and Organization of the Catholic Church*. His email address is [treesesj@ncronline.org](mailto:treesesj@ncronline.org). Follow him on Twitter: [@ThomasReeseSJ](#) [2].]

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